



State of Utah  
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
DIVISION OF WATER RIGHTS

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John Mendenhall, River Commissioner  
Spanish Fork River Distribution System  
2138 Power House RD  
Spanish Fork UT 84660

Dear John:

Enclosed is the draft explanation of river credits that I said I would prepare for you to perhaps use in the commissioners report. Would you please take a look at it and let me know if it correctly explains the procedure that you use and if it adequately covers the material?

I have listed the water users of the first 390 cfs as they are shown in the decree. I know that there have been some name changes or that some of the rights may have been purchased by others. Would you let me know if you think we should make any changes in the names as they are listed.

Any other changes you could suggest that would make the explanation more clear or more understandable would be appreciated. Thanks for your help.

Sincerely,

Lee H. Sim, P.E.

Assistant State Engineer for Distribution

Enclosure

## A BRIEF EXPLANATION OF "RIVER CREDITS" ON THE SPANISH FORK RIVER

The natural flow water rights on the Spanish Fork River below the mouth of the canyon are divided into two main groups: those who may divert water from the first 390 cfs flow of the river and those who may divert water from the second 390 cfs flow of the river.

Group 1. The water users who may divert from the first 390 cfs are:

<u>Water User</u>	<u>Proportion of the natural flow (0-390cfs)</u>
Lakeshore	60/390
East Bench	95/390
Salem Canal	55/390
South Field	75/390
Mill Race (Spanish Fork City	4/55)
(South East Field	8/55)
(West Field	43/55)
	105/390

Group 2. The water users who may divert from the second 390 cfs are:

Bureau of Reclamation (Highline Canal)	390 cfs - 690 cfs
Bureau of Reclamation (Hobble Creek I.C.)	690 cfs - 780 cfs

The Utah Lake Management Plan is limited to the unified regulation of water storage on the tributaries to Utah Lake; it does not address the regulation of natural flow water rights. Therefore the natural flow of the Spanish Fork River is regulated without regard to the priorities of water users downstream of the Spanish Fork River. According to the established water rights, whenever the flow of the river is below 390 cfs, the total natural flow must be distributed proportionally to the water users in Group 1. However, when the river flow is below 390 cfs, if any of the water users in Group 1 elect to not take their proportionate amount, the undiverted flow may be distributed first to the other water users in Group 1 and then to the water users in Group 2.

When the river flow is below 390 cfs, it is the practice of the river commissioner to account for any natural flow diverted by the Group 2 water users. On the basis of this accounting, the commissioner (with the approval of the Strawberry Water Users Association) creates a "river credit" for the Group 1 water user(s) who elected not to divert their proportionate share of the natural flow. A "river credit" is an equivalent amount of water in the Strawberry Water Users' storage allotment in Strawberry Reservoir. During the irrigation season, any users in Group 1 with "river credit" may call on it and have water delivered to them from Strawberry Reservoir. Any "river credits" remaining at the end of the irrigation season are forfeited and are not carried over to the next irrigation season.

The accounting of "river credits" is not described in the water rights of record. However, the delivery of Strawberry Reservoir water to these water users is allowable because the entire area below the mouth of Spanish Fork Canyon is described on the water rights as the place of use for Strawberry Reservoir water. The delivery of Strawberry Reservoir water to any of these lands is regulated by the Strawberry Water Users Association and not by the State Engineer. In distributing water from Strawberry Reservoir, the river commissioner operates in a separate capacity as an agent of the association.